

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

19 March 1957

STAFF MEMORANDUM NO. 16-57

SUBJECT: The Existence of a Chinese Communist Party in
the Philippines

1. We have received from a DDP office a challenge regarding a question of fact in NIE 66-57, "Political Outlook for the Philippine Republic during 1957." Paragraph 10 refers to a Chinese Communist Party in the Philippines (CCP) as "a separate organization" from the Philippine Communist Party (PKP). The paragraph also states that the CCP "operates among the estimated 400,000 Chinese residents in the Philippines," and that it "appears to have stepped up its activities during the last year and may have as many as 3,000 members." This characterization of the CCP as a distinct and functioning party was based on contributions to NIE 66-57 received from OIR, ONI, ASCI, and AFOIN, all of which treated the CCP as a party in the formal sense. The OCI Handbook, 10 September 1956, states, "A Chinese Communist Party is generally assumed to be operating in the Philippines, with a strength estimated at 3,000 to 5,000."

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2. During preparation of NIE 66-57, a draft was submitted to DD/P for comments. At that time, no objections were raised to the premise that the CCP exists as a formal party. However, DD/P now questions the existence of the CCP as a formal party, stating: "This office would like to point out that --- there is no reliable evidence indicating the existence of the Chinese Communist Party as an organization in the Philippines. There is no evidence of a formal party structure, or a central or coordinating leadership --- requisites for an organized party --- which guides or directs Communist activities among the Chinese."

3. After being queried on this point and asked to canvass their files for documentation, OIR, ONI, ASCI and OCI reported no conclusive evidence to support the position that the CCP is a formal party organization. All of these agencies, however, estimate that a Chinese Communist Party in the Philippines "probably" or "very probably" exists. AFOIN believes there is sufficient evidence, especially in FEAF Office of Special Investigation reports, to establish the existence of the CCP. *

* The writer made a surface check of OSI and other materials in the AFOIN, D-2 files on 18 March and believes there is a good deal of evidence to support the AFOIN position.

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4. On the basis of this investigation, the reference to the CCP in paragraph 10 of NIE 66-57, probably should have been in terms of an estimate rather than a statement of fact. However, we do not believe this point bears heavily enough on the estimate, which is concerned primarily with Magasyasy's reelection prospects, the effects of the base negotiations, and trends in Philippine-US relations, to warrant publishing a correction. In any event, a new estimate on the Philippines will probably now be scheduled for the second quarter of this year.

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